

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3109

EXDIS, FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, LE, IS
SUBJ: SOUTHERN LEBANON: CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS

REF: STATE 141239

1. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS MORNING JUNE 6 FOR
GENERAL DISCUSSION OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING SOUTHERN
LEBANON. I SAID THAT WE HAD A COMMON INTEREST IN MOVING
TOWARD STABILITY BASED ON A REASSERTION OF LEBANESE SOVER-
EIGNTY IN THE AREA BUT THAT IF USG WERE TO BE IN A POSITION TO
BE HELPFUL WE NEEDED TO KNOW GOL PLANS. IN RESPONSE, BOUTROS
MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

2. LEBANESE ARMY (LAF) DEPLOYMENT TO SOUTH LEBANON. BOUTROS
SAID THAT THE PRINCIPAL RESULT OF THE LATAKIA SUMMIT HAD BEEN
A PROMISE OF FULL SYRIAN SUPPORT FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE
LAF TO THE SOUTH. HE MENTIONED THAT HE HAD MET THE PREVIOUS
DAY WITH SENIOR LAF AND SYRIAN OFFICERS AND THAT THEY WERE
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MEETING AGAIN TODAY AND WOULD BE MEETING CONTINUOUSLY FOR THE
REST OF THIS WEEK TO WORK OUT THE DETAILED PLANS FOR THIS
DEPLOYMENT. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, HE SAID IT HAD STILL
NOT BEEN DECIDED WHETHER LAF UNITS WOULD GO SOUTH ON OR AFTER
JUNE 13, BUT HE IMPLIED THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY TAKE MORE THAN
A WEEK TO MAKE THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS. HE SAID LAF WOULD
DEFINITELY MOVE IN VIA THE BEKAA. IN RESPONSE TO MY OBSER-

VATION THAT POLITICIANS OF BOTH THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT SEEMED TO BE OBJECTING TO LAF DEPLOYMENT TO THE SOUTH NOW, BOUTROS REMARKED THAT IF GOL HAD FIRM SYRIAN SUPPORT THEY COULD AND WOULD DEPLOY THE LAF SOUTH DESPITE THIS OPPOSITION.

3. ADF DEPLOYMENT. BOUTROS SAID THAT THE SYRIANS WERE RELUCTANT TO SEND THEIR FORCES ANY FURTHER SOUTH THAN THEY WERE AT PRESENT AND THE LEBANESE HAD NOT FORMALLY ASKED THEM TO. IN RESPONSE TO HIS QUESTION REGARDING THE LATEST ISRAELI POSITION ON THE POSSIBLE MOVE OF ADF FORCES SOUTH OF THE SO-CALLED RED LINE, I SAID WE HAD RECEIVED CONFLICTING SIGNALS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS AND I DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE OFFICIAL ISRAELI POSITION WAS. I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE INFORMED BEFORE ANY DECISIONS ON ADF DEPLOYMENT FURTHER SOUTH WAS TAKEN. BOUTROS SAID HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THIS. AT THE MOMENT, HE WAS NOT ASKING THAT WE EXPLORE THIS QUESTION WITH THE ISRAELIS, ALTHOUGH HE MIGHT DO SO LATER. FOR THE TIME BEING, THE MILITARY PLANNING WAS BASED ON HAVING THE ADF PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT TO THE LAF IN ITS PRESENT AREA OF OPERATIONS, BUT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY FOR THE ADF TO MOVE SOME UNITS FURTHER SOUTH DEPENDING ON WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE LAF WAS DEPLOYED.

4. PALESTINIAN PRESENCE SOUTH OF THE LITANI. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, BOUTROS SAID THAT NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN MADE DURING THE LATAKIA SUMMIT AND THAT THE WHOLE CONFIDENTIAL

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PROBLEM WAS BEING PUT ASIDE UNTIL AFTER THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WAS COMPLETED AND THE LEBANESE ARMY HAD TAKEN OVER IN SOUTH LEBANON. HE SAID THAT IN HIS PERSONAL VIEW THE CAIRO/MELKART/SHTAURA ACCORDS WERE NO LONGER APPLICABLE AND NOTED THAT THE PRESENT THINKING OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS TO IMPOSE VERY STRICT CONTROLS OVER THE PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN THIS AREA ONCE THE LAF HAD MOVED SOUTH. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WERE MANY REPORTS OF CONTINUING PALESTINIAN INFILTRATION IN THE AREA AND THAT SOME UNIFIL UNITS SEEMED TO BE MUCH MORE PERMISSIVE THAN OTHERS.

5. RELATIONS WITH HADDAD. BOUTROS SAID THIS WAS A VERY DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX SUBJECT. IN THEIR MEETING YESTERDAY, SIILASVUO HAD SAID THAT THE ISRAELI/HADDAD POSITION WAS THAT HADDAD WAS THE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN ALL OF THAT AREA OF LEBANON STILL OCCUPIED BY THE ISRAELIS AND THEREFORE UNIFIL SHOULD NOT ENTER IT. THIS POSITION WAS CLEARLY UNREALISTIC BECAUSE HADDAD DID NOT CONTROL ALL THIS AREA. THE GOL HAD SENT A MESSAGE BACK TO HADDAD VIA SIILASVUO TELLING HADDAD THAT HE SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH UNIFIL'S ENTRY INTO THE REMAINDER OF LEBANON. BOUTROS SAID THAT SIILASVUO WOULD BE HAVING FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE

ISRAELIS AND HADDAD AND WAS EXPECTED BACK IN BEIRUT FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOL ON THURSDAY, JUNE 8. THE GOL WOULD THEN DECIDE WHAT ORDERS TO GIVE TO HADDAD. THEY WERE THINKING OF ORDERING HADDAD TO RESTRICT HIS ACTIVITIES TO CERTAIN SPECIFIC AREAS AND ALLOW UNIFIL TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION IN ALL OTHER AREAS, BUT THE EXACT TERRITORIAL LIMITS HAD NOT BEEN WORKED OUT. BOUTROS REMARKED THAT IF IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR THE LEBANESE ARMY TO MOVE SOUTH BY JUNE 13, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM; THE LAF UNITS NOW OPERATING WITH HADDAD WOULD SIMPLY BE INTEGRATED INTO THE ENTERING LAF FORCE AND "CERTAIN OFFICERS" WOULD BE TRANSFERRED. THE PROBLEM WAS HOW TO HANDLE THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND THE LAF TAKEOVER AND THIS WOULD REQUIRE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH SIILASVUO. BOUTROS SAID HE WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH ME AFTER SIILASVUO'S CONFIDENTIAL

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NEXT VISIT TO LET ME KNOW WAYS IN WHICH THE USG MIGHT HELP. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, BOUTROS SAID THERE WERE NO PLANS FOR AN ILMAC MEETING AND THIS SUBJECT HAD NOT BEEN MENTIONED BY SIILASVUO IN THE MEETING ON JUNE 5.

6. ARMY RETIREMENT. I MENTIONED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S SPECIAL POWERS TO DISMISS CERTAIN ARMY OFFICERS WOULD EXPIRE JUNE 30 AND ASKED IF BOUTROS ANTICIPATED THAT ANY DECISIONS WOULD BE MADE BEFORE THEN. BOUTROS REPLIED THAT THIS WAS A THORNY PROBLEM, AND HE WAS NOT AT ALL SURE THE GOVERNMENT COULD COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON HOW TO HANDLE IT. HE REMARKED THAT IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE LEBANESE ARMY HAD DEPLOYED TO THE SOUTH BEFORE TACKLING THIS QUESTION, BUT AGREED THAT THIS DID NOT LEAVE MUCH TIME.

7. COMMENT: DATT IR 6 857 0180 78 REINFORCES BOUTROS' BELIEF THAT EVEN WITH MAXIMUM SYRIAN COOPERATION, LAF WILL NOT MOVE SOUTH UNTIL AFTER JUNE 13. IF THIS IS CORRECT, UNIFIL WILL HAVE THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF WORKING OUT A MODUS VIVENDI WITH HADDAD, SHIDIAC AND THEIR SUPPORTERS. APPARENTLY, GOL WANTS A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THEIR FINAL POSITION FROM SIILASVUO BEFORE DECIDING WHAT ORDERS THEY CAN GIVE HADDAD. THEY DO NOT WANT TO GIVE HIM ORDERS HE WILL REFUSE TO OBEY. LANE

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